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A Family Tradition of Dignity,
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Faith, family, and love

ELIZABETH STEWART

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Hoyle Putnam, 87, gives his wife, Lydia, 85, a special Valentine every day. And no, it isn't a card.

He washes dishes and vacuums, so his wife of nearly 69 years gets out of the kitchen and works on Christmas presents for every member of the family – dainty embroidered pillowcases.

Lydia Hicks and Hoyle Putnam credit their faith and their close-knit family for their long wedded life.

"My sister-in-law, Reba Wright Hicks, introduced us and we spent most of our dates at church," said Lydia.

They dated a year and married March 2, 1946 in Gaffney, SC with Probate Judge W. R. Douglas officiating the ceremony. The bride was 18, the bridegroom was 20. The Sunday after their wedding day Lydia joined her husband's church, Patterson Grove Baptist, where four of their five children and their families worship with them every Sunday.

Born and raised in the Bethany Community, Lydia joined Oak View Baptist Church

as a young girl and was baptized in Bumgardner's Pond. With 10 brothers and sisters in the family, Lydia learned her cooking and sewing skills from her mother.

Hoyle grew up on his father's farm a short distance from his present home in the Patterson Grove Community. After their wedding he brought his bride back to the family farm where they farmed for two years and built their own home and raised five children. A machinist, he retired after 40 years with Gossett Machine Shop.



Mr. and Mrs. Hoyle Putnam on their wedding day March 2, 1946.

See PUTNAMS, 6A

Candidates file for 2014 elections

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More than a dozen local candidates gathered in blustery weather along with supporters outside the Cleveland County Board of Elections office Monday to file for a number of offices, including the county's top law enforcement official, the N.C. House of Representatives and the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners.



Sheriff Alan Norman

Although the submission of the filing applications and the payment of filing fees are formalities, the government office's parking lot swelled with candidates leading up to the noon opening of the filing season for upcoming elections, which will see primaries in May and general elections in November.

Incumbents Eddie Holbrook and Jason Falls are seeking new terms on Board of Commissioners. Willie McIntosh, who has previously served on the board, also filed Monday for one of its four vacancies.

Also running are incumbents N.C. Rep. Tim Moore 111th District (R-Kings Mountain), N.C. Senator Warren Daniel (R-Burke and Cleveland), U.S. Sen. Kay Hagan, U.S. Rep. Patrick McHenry, who lives in Cherryville, and N.C. Rep. Kelly Hastings 110th District (R-Cherryville).

The deadline for filing is Feb. 28. All positions will be voted on in May, with the exception of the Soil and Water Conservation Board. The general election, which includes all seats up in the May primary plus the Soil and Water Conservation Board, will be held in November.

"I would consider it an honor to continue serving Cleveland County and do my part to make this a better place to live, work, worship and play," said Falls, who is also the chairman of the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners. "I ask for your support to continue serving you as County Commissioner."

For Moore, a Kings Mountain attorney who is seeking his seventh term in the state house, this election presents an opportunity to address one of the major concerns facing

See FILING, 7A



Here comes the Snow!



Kings Mountain area citizens are bracing for a mid-February snowfall which predictors say could be 5-7 inches.

Flurries started falling about 8:30 a.m. Tuesday in Kings Mountain but by 10:30 a.m. the snowfall was increasing and city workers were readying sand and salt to begin spreading at intersections and on hills.

A winter storm warning was in effect for a significant winter storm with the main period of precipitation expected Wednesday, continuing into Thursday morning.

Forecasters say "this one is going to be a real mess."

City officials say they are ready for the snow.

See SNOW, 7A



Kings Mountain Explorer Matthew Burris joins Kings Mountain Mayor Rick Murphrey in his office in City Hall on Tuesday. Burris and members of the Boy Scouts learned about the city Friday as they toured different departments. Murphrey and Burris later visited several industrial parks to see some of the area's largest employers.

Scouts shadow city officials

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From information technology to fighting fire and crime to the daily administration of the city, Boy Scouts from local troop 92 paired up with Kings Mountain officials Friday to learn more about what makes the town tick.

Mayor Rick Murphrey explained to the scouts that Kings Mountain is a "utility-driven community," meaning that most of its revenue is derived from the sale of water, gas, electricity and sewer services.

The young men were excited for the exclusive look into the inner-

See SCOUTS, 7A

SBI report won't be released to public, for now

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District Attorney Rick Shaffer said this week that an SBI report arising out of a two-year investigation into Cleveland County Schools' finances and alleged inappropriate activity by employees will not be released to the public.

He said there is a legal basis for making that decision.

"Many of the allegations are such that unless it is determined that prosecution is warranted it would be unfair to put the information in the public domain. If it is determined that criminal prosecution is appropriate then the information would be released in a forum designed to get the truth and in accordance with the law," he said.

Shaffer continued, "There are allegations and information supporting them that are troubling and currently being considered that are of a nature that may warrant criminal prosecution. However, a determination has yet to be made as to whether such acts were committed in accordance with bad policy, abuse of policy or criminal intent. The allegations are also such that unless it is determined that criminal liability should attach it would be unfair to the parties concerned to have them released."

Shaffer told the Herald that he based his decision not to release the information after research and on a specific court case, News & Observer Publishing Company vs. State of North Carolina, 312 N.C. 276, 322 SE 2d 133 (1984). The case involved an effort by a newspaper to gain access to the results of an SBI investigation into the activities of a county school superintendent. The North Carolina Supreme Court held that access to SBI records by parties, other than District Attorneys, was permitted only upon an order of a court of competent jurisdiction when those parties were entitled to access by statute. The Court further held in cases where the parties had such access it was available only under the statutory procedures for discovery in civil and criminal cases.

"The reasons given by the Court for denying access are valid and seem to apply to the investigation in question," said Shaffer.

Shaffer continued: "First, as the Court noted, 'If investigatory files were made public subsequent to the termination of enforcement proceedings, the ability of any investigative body to conduct future investigations would be seriously impaired. Few persons would

See REPORT, 7A

Customers urged to be cautious

Across the state, utility customers are reporting that scammers are threatening service disconnection unless immediate payment is received.

The scammers are using the winter weather in the latest twist, offering customers the option to pay bills over the phone rather than venturing out in the cold.

"Don't listen to them," says City Manager Marilyn Sellers, adding, "No one employed by the City of Kings Mountain is calling customers to collect for utilities."

Sellers said that some scammers are even using legitimate names of city employees when they call, according to Electricities.

Sellers says "if you receive a call, do not listen to the scammer's instructions. Hang up the phone immediately and contact the City of Kings Mountain at 704-734-0333 or the Kings Mountain Police Department at 704-734-0444. Please do not share any personal information with these scammers."



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